

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06

COME-00 AID-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01

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DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:JRGRAHAME

APPROVED BY NEA:ADUBS

D:RBEECROFT (DRAFT)

NEA/INS:DKUX

S/S- MR. F. ORTIZ

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R 031531Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EINV, US, IN

SUBJECT: B.M. BIRLA CALL ON DEPUTY SECRETARY

1. CALCUTTA INDUSTRIALIST B.M. BIRLA CALLED ON DEPUTY SECRETARY JULY 1. INDIA COUNTRY DIRECTOR KUX AND ECONOMIC OFFICER GRAHAME ATTENDED. BIRLA HAD ALREADY CALLED ON NEA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS JUNE 28.

2. BIRLA SAID HE IS IN THE U.S. BOTH TO PROMOTE BETTER INDO-U.S. POLITICAL/ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND TO DISCUSS WITH KAISER ALUMINUM PLANS FOR A NEW 1 BILLION DOLS ALUMINUM FACILITY IN UTTAR PRADESH.

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3. BIRLA STATED THAT MRS. GANDHI HAD ASKED HIM TO CONVEY

TO THE USG HER DESIRE FOR IMPROVED INDO-U.S. RELATIONS AND CLOSER COOPERATION IN THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SPHERE. BIRLA SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS TAKEN NOTE OF U.S. OBJECTIONS TO HER SERIES OF CRITICAL STATEMENTS EARLIER THIS YEAR AND HAS NOT MADE SIMILAR STATEMENTS IN RECENT MONTHS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT INDO-U.S. RELATIONS HAVE CONSEQUENTLY IMPROVED BUT STATED HIS BELIEF THAT CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT WILL DEPEND UPON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEEPER AND CLOSER INDO-U.S. ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS. HE STRESSED THAT WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER GOI

LEADERS REMAIN CAUTIOUS ON NEW FOREIGN INVESTMENT PROPOSALS THEY ARE NOT HOSTILE TO THE U.S. AND U.S. INVESTMENT. BIRLA CONCLUDED THAT INCREASED INDO-U.S. CONTACTS AND HIGH LEVEL U.S. BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT VISITS TO INDIA OFFERED THE BEST MEANS OF MAINTAINING THE UPSWING IN RELATIONS. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE USG ENCOURAGE INCREASED GOI INVOLVEMENT IN HIGH LEVEL INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DISCUSSION AND PLANNING.

4. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY WELCOMED BIRLA'S PRESCRIPTION BUT CAUTIONED THAT INCREASED FOREIGN INVESTMENT ULTIMATELY DEPENDED UPON INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS DECISIONS BASED ON CONCRETE IMPROVEMENTS IN INDIAN INVESTMENT CLIMATE. MR. ROBINSON EXPRESSED OUR INTEREST IN EXPANDING COMMERCIAL RELATIONS, NOTED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL AND EXPRESSED OUR DESIRE TO IMPROVE POLITICAL RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF RECIPROCITY, MUTUAL RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER'S INTERESTS, AND THE AVOIDANCE OF UNJUSTIFIED CRITICISM. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRADE, ALUMINUM, ECONOMIC COOPERATION, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE166415
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JRGRAHAME
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760259-0240
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760790/aaaadcbl.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: B.M. BIRLA CALL ON DEPUTY SECRETARY
TAGS: PFOR, EINV, BEXP, US, IN, KAISER ALUMINUM, (BIRLA, B M)
To: NEW DELHI
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006